

Message Text

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61

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: EUR/AF LABOR ATTACHE CONFERENCE 1974

REF: STATE 51497; PARIS 6778; BRUSSELS 1786

1. EMBASSY BRUSSELS LABOR ATTACHE ENDORSES EXCELLENT SUGGESTIONS IN PARIS REFTEL ON ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE DISCUSSION AT SUBJECT CONFERENCE AND OFFERS FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS WITH RESPECT TO DISCUSSION OF ETUC/US AND MNC ITEMS.

2. LABATT BELIEVES THAT AT BASE OF SERIES OF SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ABOUT ETUC/US ITEM RAISED FROM PARIS LIES A GENERAL QUESTION THAT MIGHT BE DISCUSSED EARLY SO THAT DIVERGENCES OF OPINION AMONG PARTICIPANTS ARE UNDERSTOOD, IF NOT RESOLVED, AS A FRAMEWORK FOR DISCUSSION OF THE MORE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS. THAT QUESTION IS: ARE THE EUROPEANS IN
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THEIR APPROACH TO LABOR UNITY AS TO UNITY IN OTHER AREAS

BETRAYING OUR VISION OF TEM, OR IS OUR VISION WRONG; TO WIT, DO PLURALISMS IN EUROPE -- CONFSSIONAL, IDEOLOGICAL AND ABOVE ALL NATIONAL -- PLACE SOME PERCEPTIBLE LIMITS UPON THE FORM AND DEGREE OF UNITY THAT EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS CAN ATTAIN AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, UPON THE POLICIES THEY CAN COLLECTIVELY PURSUE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE EUROPE? DEPENDENT ON HOW ONE ANSWERS THIS QUESTION, IT SEEMS, IS THE LEVEL OF ONE'S EXPECTATIONS ABOUT IMPLICATIONS FOR US POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF WEST EUROPEAN TRADE UNION UNITY AND OF EAST-WEST EUROPEAN LABOR CONTACTS.

3. WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPORTANT QUESTION OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS (MNCs), LABATT BELIEVES DISCUSSIONS AT TUNIS WOULD BENEFIT GREATLY FROM PARTICIPATION OF KNOWLEDGEABLE EXPERT FROM OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT, AS WAS THE CASE IN OTHER CONTEXTS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF AFL-CIO. LABATT SUGGESTS THAT CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS CONSIDER INVITING FOR THAT PURPOSE JOHN ALLAN JAMES, FORMER EXECUTIVE OF US MNC IN EUROPE AND FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF BRUSSELS-BASED MNC PERSONNEL AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CONSULTING FIRM, MANAGEMENT COUNSELORS INTERNATIONAL. JAMES IS PROBABLY BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH THE FULL RANGE OF ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF PERSONNEL MANAGERS OF US AND OTHER MNCs IN EUROPE THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE PERSON AND, AS REPORTED IN BRUSSELS A-165 OF 6/29/73 (NOTAL, HAS HIS OWN INFORMED VIEWS OF POSSIBLE AREAS FOR MNC INITIATIVES IN THE AREA OF TRANSNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS. LABATT UNDERSTANDS JAMES, WHOM DEPARTMENT OF LABOR IS CONSIDERING AND EMBASSY HAS ENDORSED FOR PARTICIPATION IN NOV. 1974 MNC INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SEMINAR, IS PERSONALLY KNOWN TO THE DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. IF JAMES WERE TO PARTICIPATE, ARRANGEMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE EXPEDITED. STRAUSZ-HUPE

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